

## Putting Your Work in the Best Light

### Tips for Traditional Artists for photographing your work

Hearing music performed live, seeing the size, texture, and careful craftsmanship of an object, or getting energized by the movement of a dancer on stage are all invaluable experiences that are hard to capture by a still moment in a photograph. Even so, many more people have the potential of seeing your artwork through a photograph in a catalog, on a website, or as a printed image and it is important to put the work that you have invested many hours of labor, love, and careful choices in the best light for everyone to see. While many Traditional Artists will tell you that nothing can beat having your work professionally photographed and documented by an experienced photographer, often you will need to photograph your own work. Here are some tips for photographing your work:

#### Camera

- Use the best camera you have access to. Even smartphones can now take good quality photos.

#### Location

- Choose a flat surface near a wall that you can set up a single color backdrop. Tape a piece of unwrinkled fabric or paper to the wall, and drape it onto the table or floor. Remove any objects that might be in the camera's view. This piece of fabric will create an undistracting backdrop so the viewer can focus on your artwork. Try a couple of different color backdrops to determine which highlights your work best.

#### Lighting

Try to minimize shadows on your artwork that may hide details. You may have good natural light near a window, or you may need to set up one or two lights near your object to bathe the object in light. Try to point lights above and across the object instead of directly at the object. Lighting is one of the most important steps in taking a good photo.

#### Angle

Take multiple photos of your object from different angles. Try one angled slightly above the object, below, head-on center, to the right and to the left. This will give you several to choose from.

#### Distance

Try taking photos from different distances. Try to fill the frame of your camera with the object in one photo, and leave more background in the next. Be sure to take a few up close detail shots that focus on a small area of the artwork.

#### Cropping

If you have access to photo editing software on your phone or computer, make final edits to the photo by cropping the photo to best highlight the object.

